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(5 - 18 May 1953)

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AGRICULTURAL SHORTCOMINGS

Inadequate Field Work: Most broadcasts stress that although spring sowing now requires concentrated effort, other aspects of field work--from fodder procurement to pest extermination--should not be treated as lightly as in the past. Potato, vegetable and fodder production are referred to as "the most disregarded sectors" of agriculture, and the rational utilization of machinery and maintenance is seen as still inadequate. These shortcomings call for continued Party attention. Furthermore, RADIANSKA UKRAINA (2 May) says that

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last year weevils destroyed tens of thousands of hectares of sugar-beet shoots in Kiev, Poltava and other oblasts of the Republic; they had to be replanted, involving an additional expenditure of seeds and labor. However, even the resown areas yielded a poor crop.

Ukrainian text

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torik shkidnyk znyshchyy na Kyivshchyni, Poltavshchyni ta v inshykh oblastiakh respubliky skhody buryakiv na desyatkakh tysyach hektariv; ikh dovelosya peresivaty, dodatkovo vytrachaty nasinnya, trudodni. I vse zh peresiani plantatsii daly nytskyi urozhai

Not all oblasts have benefited from the lessons of the past, the paper continues. The sugar-beet weevil has again appeared "in large numbers" (u velykiy kilkosti) in Chernigov, Sumy, Kiev and Poltava oblasts, but the measures taken to fight it are inadequate. A similar situation is said to be developing in certain rayons of Vinnitsa and Zhitomir oblasts. The paper says "lack of operative administration" is also harmful to agricultural work in the Western Ukraine. Spring field work should be at its peak now but "many tractors are idle and some farmers do not report for work" (prostoyue bagato traktoriv, chastyna kolgospnykiy ne vykhodyt na robotu).

Complex Machinery Shunned: The tendency to use "simple machines" rather than large combine harvesters is not new, according to a 6 May broadcast quoting KIROVOGRADSKAYA PRAVDA. Large grain losses could have been prevented had the combine-harvesting plan not been only 45 to 77 percent fulfilled. Unfortunately, even now in a number of rayons "little is being done to eliminate last year's shortcomings." Only two machine-tractor stations actually completed their combine repairs by 1 May as scheduled, according to the paper. It is particularly critical about the low quality of repairs which are frequently no more than "improvised and patched-up jobs." Although only 50 percent of the available combines are now reported ready for work, the actual figure, the paper indicates, is probably considerably lower since many machines break down shortly after they appear in the fields, because of poor repair work. Intolerably slow Combine repair work is the subject of MARIENIEPRYANSKA PRAVDA editorial criticism, according to a broadcast from Kherson on 8 May. Noting that in four of the oblast's rayons the machines are in a sorry state of disrepair, the paper says that in a number of other (unnamed) rayons the picture is "just about as gloomy."

There are "indications of a good harvest" in Odessa Oblast this year but the technical preparations for it are "definitely unsatisfactory," according to a recent oblast conference of machine-tractor station directors and other agricultural officials, according to a broadcast on 12 May. Last year, it recalls, "considerable losses" were sustained through failure to keep the combines working more than one shift per day and to equip them with devices to recover flattened grain.

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Crop care "has been grossly neglected by many kolkhozes and sovkhoses of the Republic," says a report from Kiev on 14 May referring to the recent finding of the Collegium of the Ukrainian Ministry of Agriculture. This applies primarily to sugar beets, corn, vegetables, fodder and "other crops." Much of the success of these crops is said to depend on timely hoeing (motykannya) and weeding (propolka), but a review of these operations disclosed that in at least one oblast they had been forgotten altogether. By 10 May the hoeing and weeding plan fulfillment ranged from 65 percent for Izmail Oblast to 6.8 percent for Nikolayev and zero percent for Dnepropetrovsk Oblasts. Also, in some unnamed oblasts the crop damages caused by recent frosts call for immediate attention:

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Oblasts affected by the recent frosts are advised to look into the state of their crops, establish the extent of damage and ... insure resowing, replanting and so forth in every collective and state farm in order to completely repair the damage.

Ukrainian text:

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Oblastyam de protyakhom ostannikh dniy buly prymorozki, zapropozovano pereviryty stan posiviv, ustanovyty stepen poskodzhennia i ... zabezpechyty provedenia pidsiivu, pidсадzhivannya, peresivu ta inshy, shchob u kazhdomu kolgospri i radgospri povnostyu vidnovyty poshkodzhenny posivy.

Potato and Vegetable Scarcity TRUD (10 May) says that the production of potatoes and vegetables directly affects the people's welfare and therefore trade unions must assume a large share of the responsibility for the supply of these items. Local Soviets have long designated "near city areas" (progorodnie zony), particularly in highly industrialized oblasts, for potato and vegetable growing to augment food supplies for industrial workers. These areas are planted and tended under contract by the nearest collective farms but the crops are usually distributed by the city trade union councils (sovetov). The paper cannot understand why the trade unions, whose "prime duty" (pryamoy dolg) is to improve the workers' standard of living, "neglect" such an important source of food. In half of the rayons of the highly industrialized Yaroslavl Oblast "vegetable planting has not started" (posev ovoshchey eshche ne nachinalsya), and reports from Chelyabinsk and Astrakhan oblasts indicate that only part of the available area has been sown. This means that those areas "are foredooming themselves" (zaranye obrekayut sebya). The Uzbek Trade Unions Council, having been repeatedly warned of dwindling supplies of potatoes and vegetables for the city population has nevertheless failed to do anything about it with the result that the "vegetable area ... has gradually deteriorated" (postepenno raspadalas). This is said to be particularly true of the Tashkent district where the effect of the meager vegetable crop is already being felt.

ZNAMYA KOMMUNIZMA (8 May) says that "nothing but obvious neglect and extreme lack of organization" can explain the failure to provide for adequate potato and vegetable crops in some suburban areas in the oblast. KURSKAYA PRAVDA declares editorially on 10 May that "the fact that vegetable growing is a backward branch of agriculture" will no longer be tolerated. Many collective farms "could double and triple output" of these foodstuffs if they devoted a little more effort to it, it says. A report from Kiev (6 May), quoting from PRAVDA UKRAINY, said that despite the warning given by the Party Central Committee to ten oblasts last December against a possible lowering of the vegetable yield, the outlook is still "not very good." No details were quoted. A Talyagin article in KOMMUNIST TADHIKISTANA broadcast on 13 May says that "in a majority of kolkhozes in the Republic" the planting of potatoes and vegetables is highly unsatisfactory, and in Kuliab Oblast collective farms "are completely incapable of coping with their assignments."

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There has been no "decisive upsurge" (reshitelnyy pod'yom) in potato and vegetable cultivation, says Professor Edelstein in PRAVDA on 13 May, because the majority of machine-tractor stations do not show great interest in that work. This also accounts for the fact that "the percentage of mechanization of vegetable raising is very low" (protsent mekhanizatsii ovoshchnykh kultur ochen mal). The professor pleads for abandonment of the "primitive method" of planting by hand which requires "from 10 to 20 times as much labor as machine planting." However, he says, before machinery can be employed on a large scale the scattered vegetable patches will have to be concentrated in a single area. Such vegetable areas would also call for larger and better storage facilities (khranilishcha) and processing equipment (tara), both admittedly inadequate in most collective farms.

Discussing the effect of red tape on agricultural work, PRAVDA (8 May) asserts that top Government leaders cannot escape responsibility for failures any more than field brigades, and that decisions alone will not produce vegetables. The Council of Ministers of the Tatar ASSR is reported to have adopted ten "measures to increase production of vegetables, potatoes and dairy products" but none of the decisions was implemented owing to lack of supervision. Now the Council is trying to remedy the situation by "adopting a new decision" on that question.

Insufficient Fodder Supplies. PRAVDA's editorial criticism of the secondary role assigned the livestock industry and fodder procurement (11 May) is echoed by a number of regional transmitters, all stressing that this calls for prompt attention. Hay mowing work, for example, has been partial or completely inadequate almost every year since the end of the war. The drastic measures taken by the Government in 1951-1952 to improve that branch of agriculture and put the livestock industry back on its feet involved special bonuses for workers fulfilling the fodder plan and the withdrawing of certain material privileges from those who failed. SIAVROPOLSKAYA PRAVDA (6 May) discovers that many of the krai's agricultural officials "have learned nothing from the lessons of the past." The present situation, the paper declares, is sometimes painfully reminiscent of 1952 when much of the stacked hay was left to rot on the fields. "This caused deterioration and even complete loss of fodder." Preparations for the hay-making season this year should have been completed early in May, it says, but the work is not completed; moreover, it is being carried out in an extremely unsatisfactory manner."

PRAVDA says that the country's agricultural workers have no one but themselves to blame for the gloomy fodder-production picture which is epitomized in the adage "as you have sown so shall you reap" (chto poseyesh, to i pozhnesh). The outlook may be judged from the fact that

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despite the earlier spring, the amount of perennial grasses sown in the country as a whole is less than last year and considerably less than in 1951.

Russian text

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vesnotrya na boleye rannuyu vesnu, v iselom po strane mnogozemnykh trav poseyano neskolko menshe, chem v proshlom godu, i znachitelno menshe, chem v 1951 godu.

The most disconcerting news, says the paper, comes from Kalinin and Voronezh oblasts where the shortage of fodder has jeopardized the progress of livestock breeding. These two areas are no exception as may be seen from the list of oblasts mentioned by the paper. The editorial also refers to "preventable failures" that are responsible for fodder shortages. For example, the grass seeds allocated by the Government for collective farms and kept in oblast warehouses could have been used but were not delivered. This appears to have snarled the whole grass-planting program.

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Pskov Oblast removed only 15 percent of the seeds from its warehouses, Chelyabinsk 13 percent, Molotov 24 percent. Novosibirsk and Irkutsk oblasts have hardly begun to deliver seeds.

RADYANSKA UKRAINA (11 May) reiterates PRAVDA's charges that something will have to be done to forestall total failure of the fodder-procurement plan, and adds that the fodder situation in the Ukraine is so bad that "only increasing and self-sacrificing work ... can insure success." The plan for sowing fodder crops in the Republic "has not been fulfilled for even one crop." Zhitomir, Chernigov and Voroshilovgrad oblasts have already bungled their 1953 schedules, having completed their plans by only one-half, and Sumy oblast by even less. A report from Bryansk (15 May) quotes BRYANSKIY KRAPOVNIY as stating that the measures already adopted by the oblast to secure an adequate fodder base and further the progress of the livestock industry "are not being carried out in a satisfactory manner."

Cotton: As regards cotton raising, KOMMUNIST TADJIKISTANA points out on (6 May): "for the Republic as a whole the implementation of important agrotechnical measures is proceeding extremely unsatisfactorily." The same paper adds on 9 May that the fertilization of cotton is being carried out with "inadmissible delays," but that no one seems to be perturbed by the shortcomings of tractor and horse-drawn fertilizing machines. A report from Stalinabad of 15 May indicates that there is nothing wrong with the cotton-raising industry that "more effective leadership" will not cure, but does not amplify the point.

PARTY ACTIVITIES

Political Education: A large portion of the output on Party activities stresses the need for intensified training of rank-and-file members in Marxist-Leninist theory. A high standard of political education is seen as absolutely necessary for future Party and Government successes. The unsatisfactory performance of many political schools reveals that lack of Party control over political studies, as well as inadequate physical facilities--buildings, text books and other study aids--are to a large extent responsible for the poor class attendance and general apathy toward political education. CHERNOMORSKA KOMMUNA (5 May) hints that a look at the Party school network gives the impression that both the teachers and the students lack enthusiasm for their work. The studies "are dull and conducted at a low ideological level." Marxist theory is taught as something quite separate from the daily practice of Communist construction. One of the worst shortcomings, it declares, is "no study at all," and absenteeism, as in industry and agriculture, is not uncommon among political students.

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Sharp criticism is voiced against Communists who under the guise of independent study of the Marxist-Leninist theory failed to raise their knowledge.

STAVROPOLSKAYA PRAVDA (7 May) inveighs against the "elements of formalism, uncritical approach and abstract education (shkolyarstvo)" which are still overlooked in a number of political schools. The cramming of certain formulas, facts and dates "has nothing to do with the proper assimilation" of Marxist-Leninist dogma and contributes to the low ideological level of school instruction. In Trunovskiy, Dmitrievskiy and Mineralovodskiy rayons studies were interrupted recently by "increasing absenteeism of students" which poses a serious threat to the entire education plan. The low ideological study level is also discussed by Grebin in a broadcast from Voroshilovgrad on 8 May. "We must do something to improve the present state of affairs at the oblast Komsomol school network," he says, "if our education program is to succeed."

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He does not give any details, however, except that Komsomol schools "appear to be well organized but the ideological quality of the studies is something for the Party to be concerned about." Political education has already "collapsed" in some rayons, says KIROVOGRADSKA PRAVDA (12 May), and in others the local Party Committees "have relaxed their control over the ideological quality of political instruction."

Seminars are the life blood of the political school network, says STALINSKOYE ZNAMENIE editorially on 13 May, yet "some propagandists systematically avoid attending them." This is said to be a frequent occurrence in some of the oblast's rayons particularly in Lev-Tolstovskiy where even the Party Secretary "did not attend a single study-circle session or political school class." Propagandists are frequently "selected at random" and then left to their own meager resources. Is there any wonder, the paper asks, that the Party enlightenment program in Stalinsky, Chernyavskiy, Semenovskiy and several other (unnamed) rayons of Ryazan Oblast "has all but bogged down?" CHERNOMORSKA KOMUNA refers to the political study theme on 13 May by implicitly admitting that its recent criticism has produced no improvement in the work of the political schools and study circles. In fact, the paper has discovered that absenteeism is not confined to students alone. "In Kaganovichskiy Rayon, for example, almost 50 percent of the propagandists miss their lessons." Party enlightenment is also said to have suffered serious setbacks in Chernyavskiy, Razdelnyanskiy and other rayons where systematic school training has been replaced by occasional political lectures.

PRAVDA's editorial view (14 May) of the political training program is that vigorous Party leadership and unrelaxing control over the school networks are required to bring the academic year to a successful conclusion. Such control, however, is said to be lacking in too many oblasts, particularly in Irkutsk, Kirov and Novosibirsk, where it has virtually been abandoned. Interruptions (sryvy) are frequent and school attendance is small (niska posesochayemost). RYANSKA UKRAINA (13 May) reports "serious shortcomings" in the political education of the Sumy and Nikolayev oblast schools. Seminars "are held irregularly" and the discussion of important ideological themes is either formal and superficial or avoided altogether. KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA (14 May) is comparatively mild in its criticism of the slow progress of political enlightenment. It merely says that it might be a good idea, in view of the approaching end of the academic year, to devote a little more to reviewing past achievements and finding out how much theoretical knowledge has actually been assimilated by the students.

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